

health insurance. Many of their parents cannot afford to send them to doctors or dentists for regular checkups. In fact, doctors never see half of uninsured children with asthma or one-third of those with persistent ear infections.

The answer is clear. Congress should encourage the creation of affordable kids-only insurance plans. Right now the United States is the only major industrialized Nation whose children do not have a guarantee of health insurance. With 10 million of our children endangered without insurance, think about it; 10 million American children have no health insurance. What does it say about us if we fail to act?

A LEGACY OF DEFENSE CUTS

(Mr. HUNTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, the President's defense budget is now in, and he continues to slash national security. He has cut the Army from 18 divisions, that is what we had during Desert Storm, to 10 divisions. Cut it almost in half. He has cut our air power from 24 fighter airwings to only 13. He has cut air power almost in half. He has cut our Navy from 546 ships, that is what we had during Desert Storm, to only 346 ships.

Mr. Speaker, this President wants a legacy, but if we endorse his budget on national security, his legacy will be that he is the President that left us unprepared for war.

EXPANDING HEALTH INSURANCE FOR AMERICAN CHILDREN

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, as a father and also a Member of this body, I rise to add my voice to those leaders of my party who yesterday called upon the majority to work in this session toward expanding health insurance for American children. When we know that 10 million American children have no health coverage, I wonder why the majority leadership of this body needs to be asked to make this pressing need for American families a priority.

Mr. Speaker, our economy is changing and unfortunately too many new jobs do not offer health insurance for workers' families and workers' children. Ninety percent of these uninsured children's parents work. I was proud to participate in the introduction of the families first agenda last year when I was a candidate for this office. That agenda addresses the real needs of our families and if made into law would make health coverage available to those families. Those are the priorities of the people of the Ninth District of Texas and that they elected me to fight for. It may not be popular inside the beltway but if we want to rebuild the

trust of the American people in this institution, those are the priorities both parties should share.

PASS BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR OUR CHILDREN

(Mr. SCARBOROUGH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I love children. I have two children myself, and I enjoy listening to politicians try to use children for their own political gain, especially when it smacks of hypocrisy. Some politicians in Washington love children so much that they go to them first when they want to steal their money. This country is in debt to the tune of \$5.5 trillion and guess who Senator KERREY's commission, a Democrat, said was going to be paying for that \$5 trillion?

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Senator KERREY's commission says by the year 2020, because of the \$5.5 trillion deficit, our children will pay 89 percent of every dollar they earn to taxes to the Federal Government.

Now if these people really love children, they can pass a balanced budget amendment, get rid of Potomac fever; stop promising one thing at home, coming up to Washington DC, doing something else, and start allowing our children to have the same American dream that each one of us was able to enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, we need to pass it now.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Democratic leadership's proposal to add children's health care to the priorities we address this session. Today more than 10 million American children have no health insurance coverage.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday the New York Times reported that over the past 5 years the number of children without insurance has risen twice as fast as the number of adults. Most of these are the children of working families earning between \$15,000 and \$45,000 per year. In my State the Maine Health Care Commission estimated that in 1996 36,000 Maine children had no health insurance coverage, and 91 percent of Maine's uninsured children live in families with at least one working parent.

Ten million American children relying on emergency room treatment instead of a family physician is wrong and expensive. We can and must do better. This Congress should encourage kids-only insurance policies and expand basic Medicaid coverage to uninsured children.

PASS THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, as a father of four children I certainly share the concern that so many people have expressed about our children. That is why I am hoping that many Members on that side will join us in the passage of a balanced budget amendment.

As we know, yesterday, because of the New Jersey Senator, the balanced budget appears to be dead in the U.S. Senate. But, as my colleagues know, if we are going to balance the budget we have to have that constraint. It is the same constraint my colleagues and I have in our households; it is the constraints that parents have when they are saying no to their children who want more of this and more of that.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] mentioned earlier that if we continue on the path we are on, our children will have a tax rate of 89 percent just to maintain the present level of goods and services in America.

While I know there are Members of the House who want a brand new entitlement program, I think it is very important that we look at what are we going to do for tomorrow's children. If we want to help the children of tomorrow, we should not enslave them with an 80- or 90-percent tax burden. Reach out to them and let them share in the American dream so that they can go out and help another generation.

INVESTING IN THE HEALTH OF OUR CHILDREN

(Mrs. CLAYTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to also challenge my colleagues to begin to think that we as a Nation have an opportunity to say that our children indeed are important, not only as we want to use them to talk about the balanced budget or use them to talk about education. But when it is said, really when one thinks of how a society reacts, it is how it takes care of its children. Surely, surely, the health of our young people is equally as important as the opportunity for them to pay taxes.

Their health indeed may mean that we may pay less taxes if we invest early. Recent reports have indicated that if we take care of our children early in their life, not only their carpentry skills but their health skills and education skills are better. And, therefore, if we invest in our children we have an opportunity not to have such severe health costs later in life.

So investing in our children is not a Democratic issue, it is not a Republican; it should be an American issue because we care about our children.